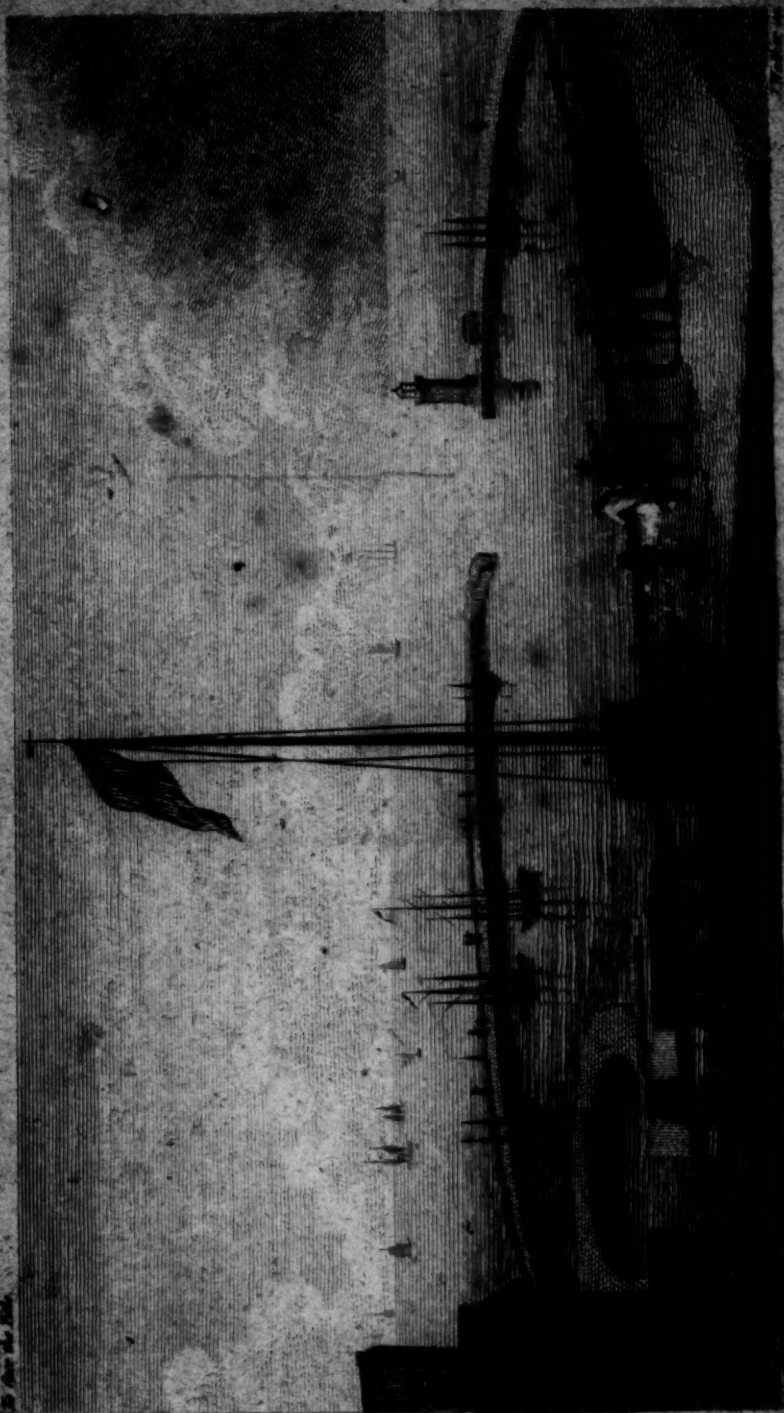


Kind Guardian of Fashion, Decrepitude, &c.



Kind Guardian of Fashion, Decrepitude, &c.

THE
SEA-SIDE,
A
POEM,
IN
FAMILIAR EPISTLES
FROM
Mr. SIMKIN SLENDERWIT, *lc*
Summerising
At RAMSGATE,
TO
HIS DEAR MOTHER IN TOWN.

Perpetuo Rifu Pulmonem agitare solebat
Democritus, quanquam non essent Urbibus illis
Prætexta et Trabæ, Fasces, Lætica, Tribunal:

Juv.

The SECOND EDITION, with great
Improvements, and an Appendix.

London :

PRINTED FOR T. N. LONGMAN PATER-NOSTER-ROW,
AND J. BELL, NO. 148, OXFORD-STREET.

1798.



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THE
SEA-SIDE.

LETTER I.

*Mr. Simkin's Arrival — His first Visit to the Sea Shore —
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Manners — Invocation to Ocean.*

WHO would not, dear mother, to RAMSGATE
repair,

To gain health from the ocean and flirt with the fair?

'Twould have made you laugh hard to have seen me
and Billy.

What frights we arriv'd, t'other night, in the Dili:

B

With

With our hair so dishevell'd, our faces so black,
Dirty boots, and our very worst coats on our back;
That at night, as we walk'd, just to look at the pier
And see who of our friends had yet brought themselves
— here,
The ladies and gentlemen star'd at our phizes,
And dub'd us, no doubt, unaccountable quizes.

But betimes, my dear mother, next morning we
rose,
Shav'd, dress'd and both put on a good suit of clothes ;
And went before breakfast, an hour, or more
Fresh air to inhale, on the sea-pickled shore.

Here

Here we met half-cloth'd beaux, and fine ladies

unlac'd,

All to soufe for their health in the ocean in haste ;

O ! what fidget and wriggle to get a machine,

Such a bustle, dear mother, sure never was seen :

Miss Nash, are you ready ?"—

" Yes Ladies, this way."—

" Have you taken some towels ?"—

" O, yes Ma'am, come pray."—

" I declare, Mrs. Fish, I don't know what's the matter,

" But I always dread vastly to plunge in the water :

" The faculty tell me, 'tis good for my nerves,

" And sure no complaint such attention deserves :

" Without nerves, one's unfit for life's gayer routine;
 " Without nerves, one in public should never be seen;
 " Strong nerves, kill the vapours and vanquish the
 spleen."

And now piping-hot, comes my lady Griggs Clackit,
 With her gypsy-mode hat and her dimity jacket :
 Six feet and a half is her ladyship's height,
 And twenty stone twelve is her ladyship's weight :
 Just escap'd from the bath, how the good lady chuckles !
 She vows she's been in, from her toes, to her knuckles
 " A bath so delightful, sure never was seen,
 " Like crystal so clear, so transparent ! so green !

" Head-foremost I plung'd, till I could plunge no longer,

" And I thought ev'ry time I came out, I felt stronger :

" It does me such good, I shall soon go in daily,"

When roars out a masculine voice, " I want Bailey !"

" One would think that old fellow did nothing but
hide,

" I shall lose all the morning in hunting my guide !

Now tripping along come two maidens of blood ;

" O ! give us a driver that's steady and good :

" Who burns not at females quite naked to glance,

" But can swim like a fish, if we meet a mischance.

"For Miss FIBER protests that whene'r we go in--"

"'Tis by far the best way to strip quite to the skin."

So they chatter, and dabble, and bustle, and boast,
While others steal home to their tea and their toast:
And while they are drinking and munching away,
They scheme out a party for killing the day.

But don't, my dear mother, imagine, that, soon
Is ended the play of this health-giving boon,
For it lasts, I assure you, each morning till noon:
Till noon, are the guides, the machines, and their drivers,
For the health of the nation most zealous contrivers:

Till

THE SEASIDE.

7

Till noon, does great ocean, each forth-coming day,
Wash disease and corruption all kindly away:
Till noon, the blue women—amphibious witches,
(I think they would manage it better in breeches)
In petticoats, flounc'd with salt water, bestride,
For the general welfare, the health-giving tide.

For some, you must know, as the faculty tell 'em,
Must ne'er duck their stomachs till after they fill 'em;
So first, puny creatures, they swallow their tea,
And then, they may venture to dip in the sea.

But many, each morning, are up with the crow,
And the first thing they do, into ocean they go:

There dabble awhile, and then walk on the pier,
 Raise a glow most enchanting and life-loving cheer.
 While others just bathe, and to bed in a trice,
 Vastly pleas'd that they follow the doctor's advice.

But fashion, in this, as in all things, has sway,
 And manners and customs but linger their day.

Jenny Sutton, ——— the knowing ones call her THE

SQUINTER—

Is to ride all the summer and bathe all the winter :

Poor Jenny ! she hopes the salt water will freeze,

Nor her poor little nerves so terrifically tease :

And many, I'm told, like the poor little SQUINTER

Are order'd to stay here, and bathe all the winter.

O ! Ocean !

O! Ocean! thou guardian and friend to man-
kind,

To the best of thy favours, how many are blind!

The merchant, who cares but to live like himself,

Extols thee for floating home coffers of pelf:

The alderman, pours out his thanks to his God

Who stock'd thee with salmon, and turbot, and cod:

The scholar, who knows not the blessings of home,

Sings thy waves so transporting, which grant him to

roam,

And shew him old Peloponnesus and Rome:

Which lead him to climes, fam'd for Pompeys and

Neros,

And bring him to plains, trod by Consuls and Heros;

While

While philosophers, poring from midnight till noon,
 Make us stare with their tales of thy jig to the
 moon.

But I thy waves honour, with just veneration,
 For diffusing such good o'er the whole of this nation
 In infancy, thou, while we struggle and squall,
 Driv'st off scrophula, rickets, and weakness and all:
 'Tis thou giv'st to Jacky and Susan—sweet pair!
 The blessing they've languish'd so long for,—an heir:
 Returning from thee, with thy bounties elate,
 Sue brings home a boy to retain the estate:
 'Tis thou giv'st the rake, weak with revels and pain,
 To pick up his crumbs and go to it again:

'Tis

'Tis thou giv'st the demerip, slave to disease,

Again to recover her talent to please :

'Tis the virtue supreme of thy catholic wave,

That so many poor mortals each summer doth save :

That, as potent as magic, the aged makes young,

And turns, by its tonic, the tender to strong :

That rescues their lives from the grave and from

crutches,

If it wash but a beggar, a duke, or a dutchess.

Then O ! may thy waters, for ages yet longer,

Continue this nation to cleanse and make stronger :

May they wash off decrepitude, lengthen our lives,

And fasten the knot 'twixt our husbands and wives :

Grant

Grant them conjugal bliss, such as sent from above,
And give them each year a sweet pledge of their love:
Make us potent in council and wise in debate,
To keep off our enemies far from our state,

And O! may thy borders each summer display
A group thus harmonious, thus lively and gay!
Where, unanimous all, there's no struggle or strife,
But to throw away money and treasure up life.

Would the post give me time to keep scribbling
still,
What sheets on this subject, dear mother, I'd fill!

But

But I hear the vile horn, and must lay down my pen,
So, with duty, I'm your's till I take it again.

RAMSGATE,

JULY 29th, 1797.

SIMKIN SLENDERWIT.

POSTSCRIPT.

Don't wonder, dear mother, to find it my pleasure
To fend you a letter that's written in measure;

Folks

Folks tell me, my brain is a banquet of fun,
 A storehouse of epigram, sonnet, and pun :
 And my hand-gallop lines, tho' like prose running mad,
 If they meet but your smiles, shall esteem themselves
 glad

LETTER II.

A Descendant of Esculapius — The late Mrs. Nash.

YOU told me, dear mother, to ask a physician
 The state of my health and my body's condition,
 Before in the ocean I ventur'd to dip,
 Yea, before the salt water I ventur'd to sip;
 And you know very well that no darling obeys
 His parent's kind wish with such dutiful ways.

So now, I had follow'd your counsel indeed,
 But no longer can RAMSGATE boast good Dr. REID:

And

And the gay Dr. MERRY, a twelvemonth or more,
Has pack'd up his alls and forsaken this shore.

Thus oppos'd, my dear mother, I ask'd in a trice,
What man was in greatest repute for advice :
And soon was I told of a queer little elf,
Who prescrib'd me a dose, and then sent it himself :
His stature I guess to be three feet and ten —
A trifle below the just standard of men —
But you'll think he to trav'ling, a wonderful mind has,
When I tell you his knapsack he always behind has :
'Tis well he wa'n't born at the town LACEDÆMON,
Tho' pethaps, you my meaning mayn't easily dream on :

But,

But, had old LYCURGUS beheld little punch,
He'd been sent to TAYGETUS to starve for his hunch :
His HIPPOCRAT noddle, with rolling beholders,
Is fix'd in a valley between his two shoulders :
And, the summit athwart of this storehouse of sense,
A three-corner'd hat doth its honours dispense :
Whose pinch, so fierce pointed, doth thro' the wind sail,
Like a light little cutter before a strong gale :
And then, like great Hercules arm'd with a club,
He weilds a stout cane with a gold colour'd nob :
Thus equipp'd, like Grimalkin a prowling for prey,
He saunters thro' Ramsgate the whole of the day.

See him enter my room with a strut and an air,
 Complain of the heat and assume the great chair :
 There to guess how he look'd you must call to your
 mind,
 A Pagod, you've seen in a corner enshrined,
 Where, with knees both erected, and squat on his
 breech,
 The queer little minikin sticks in a niche.

Now began he to talk of my symptoms and case,
 " Pray how many days have you been at this place ?
 " I always pronounce — be whatever the matter —
 " 'Tis wrong without phyfic to go in the water :

" So

"So d'y'see I shall send you a nice pleasant potion,"

"That shall put your intestines in gentle commotion."

Then he ogled his peepers, and ask'd with a leer,

"Pray what was the malady brought you down here?"

Said I, "my good Doctor, the general case,

"My nerves to improve and my fibres to brace."

But his comical nod and significant wink

Made me guess — and I'm right to this moment, I think:

That the queer little quiz had conceiv'd me a rake,

Tho' you, my dear mother, well know his mistake.

To my case the good Doctor was very attentive,

And sent, in an hour, his potion preventive:

The whole of that day and the next till the middle,
Did I dance to the tune that he play'd on my fiddle :
Then cur'd was my carcase for bathing and splashing,
So that nought I've to do but to-morrow to dash in :
And when next, dear mother, I write, I wont fail,
My soufing adventures, at length to detail.

But first, as you know I've created your laughter,
By my dread at the thought of a duck in cold water :
To manage the matter completely and gaily,
I'll crave the assistance of old Johnny Bailey ;
Who courage inspires in the midst of starvation,
And, half in the water, will make an oration.

What

What tho' but *one* leg to his body belong,
 On that leg he is reckon'd to stand pretty strong :
 And, if a mischance to poor SIMKIN befel,
 By the help of that leg he would swim very well :
 But, in case of a storm or a rough beating tide,
 By all he's confests'd a most excellent guide.

O! a GUIDE when I name, let me sing Mrs.

NASH,

Who so many good folks, in salt water did wash :
 Who travers'd for so many summers this shore
 And might, but for death, have done so many more :
 Who rose with the lark and whose heart was all glee
 If she saw but a calm and a smooth-bathing sea :

Who encourag'd the tim'rous with praise of the water,
Assuring 'twould cure them, whate'er was the matter :
Whose prate has made many a little one bellow,
When she tapp'd the back door, and cry'd, " come little
fellow."

Fourteen summers ago, little SIMKIN did squall
At her summons terrific, and vigorous haul ;
When you know, my dear mother, we thought it no
crime,

If both of us fill'd a machine at a time.

Poor woman ! they never will meet with another

So good, e'en at ducking a grenadier's mother :

Tall or short, weak or stout, to the general wonder,
She'd give them a trip, and then fouse them clean
under :

But alas the good woman ! her thread it is spun,
Her day it is ended, her race it is run :

From life's filly farce she her *exit* has made,
And flat on her back at St. Lawrence she's laid.

There she, who wash'd so many *found*,

Must rot beneath the sod :

Cherubs in cotton wrapt her heart,

And bore it to her God,

May active Good, and humble Worth,
Her just salvation plead;
And gain her in seraphic climes,
The never-fading meed!
Unprofan'd, undisturb'd, may her still ashes rest,
And the turf's verdant hillock lie light on her breast!
The primrose and daisy and violet bloom,
And laurels spontaneously sprout from her tomb!
May the streams which in happy Elifium flow,
Give the just her terrestrial talent to know!
May her soul cleanse the souls of the good evermore,
As her body their bodies hath cleans'd on this shore!

May the babes whose existence she strove to prolong
 Chant around her blest spirit sweet gratitude's song !
 And while bathers on Thanet's gay island are found,
 May her memory never in Lethe be drown'd !

But I hear you exclaim, " prithee SIMKIN have

" done ;"

So believe me, as ever, your dutiful son.

RAMSGATE,
 AUGUST 12th, 1797.

SIMKIN SLENDERWIT.

THE

POST.

POSTSCRIPT.

Little Billy desires to join with his brother

In duty and kindest regard to his mother:

This excellent bathing, I think there's no doubt,

Must soon drive his symptoms of scrophula out.

RAMSGATE,

August 12th, 1857.

SIMON STENDERWIT.

POST-

-LET

LETTER III.

Mr. Simkin bathes, and then goes to Dandelion.

RESOLV'D like a man to perform an ablution,
 And strengthen my nerves and my weak constitution;
 Dear mother, I rose with the lark t'other morning,
 The lullabies soft of the drowsy god scorning!

Then see me at Nash's, in loose *negligée*,
 On nothing intent but a dip in the sea:
 There, first, of the manners of others an aper,
 I wrote down my name on a long bit of paper:

And,

And, after ten minutes of musing and prating,
The towels, machine, and John Bailey were waiting.

JOHN BAILEY, I said in a former epistle,
When funkers are bathing doth far from assist ill:

Thus, in cases like mine, he is bather and driver,
And rubber and dresser and gen'ral contriver.
O! 'twould do your heart good were you plac'd within
hearing

Of his prate, like a nurse to her baby, so cheering:

Of his stoic contempt of the tide and the wind,

And his Jehus vociferous to ball that is blind.

There, first, of the manners of others an apt

I wrote down my name on a long bit of paper:

And

Then

Then he doffs in a minute his coat and his caxon,
 And the patch that he fixes his fore leg with wax on :
 And while about courage and heart he doth bore me,
 I see the Apollo stark naked before me.

His manly look ! his open chest !

His limbs so stout and bony !

The sturdy fellow stands confess'd,

Well made to duck a crony.*

* Thus Goldsmith in Edwin and Angelina.

" The bashful look, the rising breast,

Alternate spread alarms :

The lovely stranger stands confess'd

A maid in all her charms."

But,

But, as backward we drive and I banish my fears,

What strains of shrill discord assail both my ears !

What sweet pretty voices their terrors confessing !

What mothers so coaxing, their babies careressing !

What brats so unruly are squalling and kicking !

What cross little children deserving a licking !

Then here floats a stocking, a cap, or a ruff,

And there swims a lady in blue and in buff :

Here I see Mrs. Darby great ocean bestride,

There a stout brawny fellow doth buffet the tide.

And of late, my dear mother, 'tis vastly the go

For gents and for ladies to dabble in Co ;

Thus

Thus Miss Clinch, Lady Gargle, and Tabitha Spleen
All clubb'd and got wash'd in a single machine ;
While General Woodcock and Stephen, his brother,
Kept each other's company snug in another.
Lady Manlove declar'd she must always soufe single,
And so did her sister Miss Blotch, and Miss Pringle ;
But the lovely Miss Strings and their lovelier cousins
Are fond, — social creatures, — of ducking by dozens ;
Like the cram'd caterpillars* on Kensington road,
Their merry machine cleaves the soft-yielding flood ;
How they chatter and titter and twist as they ride !
And then give, one by one, their soft charms to the tide.

* A nick-name for a species of caravan with many wheels.

But,

But now, my dear mother, what numbers rely on
 The smile of the morn'ning gay Dandelion!
 What posés from Ramsgate and Margate are seen
 Repairing to lunch and to dance on the green!
 All with hearts light as feathers they scud it along,
 A mirthful, wide-grinning, and sport-loving throng.

But the lovely Miss String and their lover's coming
 Shall Billy and I then bewail the long day,
 While the folks all around us are gadding and gay,
 Shall two such smart fellows in life's glowing prime
 Mope at home and by minutes both strangle their time?
 And then give, one by one, their lost charms to the tide?
 No! No! "run Rebecca to Young's in a minute,"
 Let him get us two nags tho' he storm up all Thanet:

Fat or lean, dull or frisky, with long tails or short,

We care not a fig so we share but the sport.

! And now in your chair which the Muses shall draw,

Come with us, dear mother, and see the gay show :

See a garden in nature's fair dresses array'd,

Where Flora's bright tints shine in lovely brocade

And a carpet is spread of the soft verdant blade

Which this morning was shav'd all the steps to en-

chant

Of the people dispos'd for this exquisite jaunt.

See a row of alcoves, like the booths at a fair,

Where the weary, the sun-burnt, the hungry repair :

D

See

See crowds of fine ladies and gentlemen pouring
Their presence so charming at yon little door in :
See tea, coffee, butter and rolls brown and white,
To the hungry, dear mother, how charming a sight !
See waiters with kettles run jostling along
And scalding their way thro' the thickening throng :
See numbers in earnest a making a breakfast,
And feeding as if they had fasted this week past.

But hark ! mother, hark ! the horn's echoing
bellow !

The hautboy's shrill twang ! the brisk fiddle ! the
mellow

Bassoon ! and the sweet grumbling violoncello !

Hear

Hear and see the good fellows who puff and belabour,
With mouth, stick and fist, the gay pipe and the tabor :
See, see, all the nimble ones cap'ring and prancing,
And mounting the boards made on purpose for dancing,
While the rest, in the freaks of the youngsters de-
lighting,

Form around them a ring, like round butchers a fighting.

Then see Kitty Patch,

The niece of old Scratch,

A fat wealthy son of the city :

What capers she cuts !

With her head how she butts !

How she strives with her toes to be witty !

See Margery Grace,
 With an arm like a mace,
 And a leg as wide round as post is:
 Tho' perhaps not so pretty,
 Nor yet quite so witty,

She thinks "she's as genteel as most is."

See Betty Maclean,
 How her ankles are seen
 As she foots it along with the banker:
 Like a note see him twist her,
 Carefs and affist her,
 Then make a sweet *congé* to thank her.

See, see, charming Dolly,

How spunky ! how jolly !

At fifty the maiden is blooming :

How she vibrates with grace

On her slim little base,

While the gales her stout whiffs are perfuming !

Next see Bobby Chuckle,

His beautiful buckle,

His coat not so long as a jacket :

How he shifts both his pins !

How prettily grins,

And nods to his cousin, Bet Lackit.

See old Benjamin Bung,
Resolv'd to be young
Tho' it costs him a terrible stewing :
How weighty and strong
He puffs it along,
And labours as if he was brewing !

So they dance and they stare and they saunter and
prate,
Till at once they bethink them *it grows very late* ;
And then they all scuddle and bustle and run,
As wild geese take wing at the noise of a gun :
See some gain their coaches, their horses, their gigs,
And some press the road with their very best legs :

All

All agog, — precious souls, — for another repast,
More solid, more social than that which is past,
With stomachs full keen from the whet of the last.

See the charming Count Dip and his lady divine
In their curricle hasten to Margate to dine :
How the chariots and coaches and phaetons rattle
Like hosts on a march all in order of battle !
How the dust, in swell'd billows saluting the skies,
Chokes the wide-grinning fair ones and peppers their
eyes !

So quitting, with sorrow, dear mother, this fun,
Believe me, as ever, your dutiful son.

RAMSGATE.

AUGUST 19th, 1797.

SIMKIN SLENDERWIT.

LET-

LETTER IV.

*Improvements, Diffusion, &c. of Science — more
especially among the Ladies.*

WHAT tribute! what praise! my dear mother,
are due

To all those who the general welfare pursue.

You've read, there's no doubt, of a Roman declaimer
Who'd tip you a speech on the PATRIÆ AMOR:
And nations have been, who, for ages before,
To the maxim magnanimous evidence bore.

Nor

Nor yet, my good mother, I pray you don't think't,
Tho' a little impair'd, is the notion extinct :
And in plans for the general good of mankind
We leave those old fellows a great way behind.

For who can to Burges's or Witherden's go
And not be quite charm'd with the exquisite show
Of authors both living and dead in a row ?

Ye gents ! and ye ladies ! whose heads are so kind
As to think upon nought but the good of mankind,
No plan your intentions so well could advance
As spending your leisure in writing ROMANCE :

O ! 'twould

O! 'twould lighten your labours, you'd scribble with
glee,

If you knew how you favour the folks at the sea :

If you knew how each rich and each delicate notion

Contributes its help to the deeds of the ocean :

If you knew how your bountiful, head-aching, trade

The nostrums and pains of the Faculty aid.

It charms me when one of your neat little pages

The bore of an indolent minute engages :

How some sweet-conceiv'd tale, which I'd tell in an

hour,

Is teaz'd into length by your delicate pow'r !

Your

Your lips, hung with fancy, you scarcely can ope,
But out there must fly a most exquisite trope :
Some high-season'd metaphor seizes my eye ;
Some strain of pathetic solicits a sigh ;
Some charming conceit piping-hot from the heart,
Thrills my soul with the chant of a magical art.

But most I am pleas'd with your manners so
yielding,
How chang'd are your fashions, since Smollet and
Fielding !
How simple your plots, less fatiguing to follow !
Your notions how apt to an age that is shallow !

Your

Your types how adapted to eyes that are dim !

Your margins how ample ! your pages how slim !

Then who shall deny to the lovely soft ladies

Of use most extensive your elegant trade is ?

To kill a long morning no species of writing

To them is so virtuous, so pure, so inviting :

Your feats in romance, it must please you to state 'em,

Can glow in their bosoms, can freeze their pomatum :

Can trim up the lustre that lurks in their peepers,

Can make them bad wakers or terrible sleepers,

What flames in the maiden of twenty arise !

How warm are her cheeks and how beam her glad eyes !

When

When she reads in the page of descriptive Miss Burney*

(Who to just what she pleases can any time turn ye)

Of Delville, so tall and so straight and so slender,

With an air so genteel and a bosom so tender,

With notions so form'd in the mouldings of love,

Sweet attribute ! sent down no doubt from above

And borne on the pinion of Cythera's dove.

: Miss throws down the book and quite pleas'd with

the plan

Exclaims, " bounteous Heaven ! send me such a man :

With him could I live in a palace or goal,

" Could burn at the LINE or e'en freeze at the POLE.

* Now Mrs. D'Arblay.

" Such

- " Such a man could I love, O! I speak not in joke,
" A thousand times more than does ivy the oak:
" A thousand times more than do fishes the flood,
" Or more than the lion and tiger the wood:
" Send me such a lover and make me his bride,
" I ask ye, kind powers! no blessing beside!"

Sweet Delville! he haunts her by day and by night,
Of Delville she dreams and awakes with delight:
Tho' many she meets with, to Delville unequal,
With Delville she hopes to be blest in the sequel:
But ah! hapless maid! doom'd at last to complain
Not earth's countless offspring can boast such a swain,
He lives, but, alas! in Miss Burney's kind brain.

Then

Then you know, my dear mother, the art scientific
 Is become 'mong the ladies extremely prolific.
 The present enlighten'd and elegant days
 Boast critics, philosophers, poets, in stays,
 And profound politicians, who many perplex
 With assertions, so just, of the rights of their sex.

One lady,* as balls and as routs had as soon
 Be peeping all night thro' a tube *at the moon*:
 And what, tho' it merit our praise, rather odd is,
 She gives up *wile* man for the heavenly bodies:
 She thinks of, she dreams of, she swears by—HER STARS;
 She revels in nightly adventures with MARS:

* Miss Herschel.

And

And if the gay *wanderer* flies her embrace,

Kind MERCURY pities and comforts her case.

Then another,* has found out an excellent traffic
By flakeing the thirst of the rage biographic:
She has fed very well many more times than once on
The coveted flesh of the great Dr. Johnson:
No longer the spousy of *dear* Mr. 'Thrale,
She spurns immortality drawn out of ale,
And soars, with a bold and adventurous wing,
The words and the feasts of the Doctor to sing.

* Mrs. Piozzi.

But see! mother, see! the fair handmaids of

PHOEBUS,

The ladies so scienc'd in sonnet and rebus :

Industrious creatures ! how oft they amass us,

A sweet little posy of spriggs from **PARNASSUS** !

How tickle our taste with a delicate olio !

Indulging the world with their pretty portfolio ;

In typography's pride so superbly express'd !

Such charming wove paper with types of the best !

So neatly embellish'd ! so finely hot-press'd.

Sure none, with distaste or conception malicious,

Can frown on a *petit morcean* so delicious :

All ! all ! must be scorch'd with poetical fire,

And bend to the sway of the conquering lyre.

O ! 'twould

O ! 'twould soften your dimples and cost you a smile
 Could I sing ALL the scienc'd-skill'd fair of our isle :
 With what joy in their cause would I brandish my pen !
 And prove them in all things a match for the men.

But my pow'rs are unequal, my talents too shallow,
 A theme so sublime and extensive to follow :
 So e'en let me leave them, relinquishment hard !
 A food for the maw of some happier bard.
 But, ere I resign, let me sing preservation
 To the temples which give these good deeds circu-
 lation,
 And merit so well of the whole of this nation.

Ye storehouses sacred ! ye sanctified hovels !
The shrines of good poetry, farces, and novels :
The seats of gay merriment pleasure and glee
To the folks who resort to the shores of the sea :
The scenes that each bore and each illness can baffle
By reading, extravagance, noise, or a raffle.
O ! long may ye flourish in splendour and pride,
The bounds of omnipotent ocean beside !
Long stand, by no lightnings or tempests dismay'd,
Preserv'd by MINERVA's particular aid !
Long enrich the young mind and instructive diffuse
Sweet lessons of love and the flights of the muse !
Long brilliant in gimcracks and pageantry smile
And long the dull months of the summer beguile !

Be mirrors of fashion and elegance long
And ne'er lack a POET to make you his song!

But if thus I get on I shall never have done
So believe me, dear mother, your dutiful son,

RAMSGATE,

AUGUST 26th, 1797.

SIMKIN SLENDERWIT.

Be mistress of himself and elegance long
And never lack a art to make you his long!

But if that I get on I shall never have done
To believe me, dear mother, your faithful son,

KANSOAT

August 20th, 1797.

GIRKIN GLENDEWIT.

LETTER V.

*Mr. Simkin attends the Assembly-Ball — His Delight —
A Disaster — The Charms of Motion.*

THE fiddles and clarinets, hautboys, and drums,
Still ring in my ears their fantastical hums :
Still Margery Magpie, on rigadoon toe,
Through the *Boulanger's* maze seems before me to go :
Still lovely Miss Maypole stalks stately along,
In grenadier pride, through the frolicksome throng :
And sweet Master Craven, so slim and so dapper,
Still seems on his long pins before me to caper :

So great, my dear mother, so strong the possession
I have of the BALL's most enchanting impression.

What sights did I see! what gay people behold!
The young and the frisky, the limping and old,
The jocund, the grave, and the sickly and all,
Like vermine in sunshine, must smile at a ball.

What nights could I spend and what rapture enjoy?
Were dancing, dear mother, my only employ!
What ages with transport could gaze on the features
Of so many mirth-making elegant creatures!
My taste how improve and my manners refine
By watching the ways of the ladies divine!

And

And nothing's so charming, by all 'tis confess'd,
As the sight of fine women extremely well dress'd.
Then the lustre that beams from the rich chandeliers,
And the strains so harmonious that shake all the
spheres,
Make the evening on pinions of rapture steal by,
While sound charms the ear and bright beauty the eye.

But to write the description to you at a distance,
I must crave all the muses kind aid and assistance:
Attic salt for my humours to warrant their keeping
And life to my numbers to save you from sleeping:
Again too, dear mother, I'll alter my measure,
A favour they grant me to use at my pleasure.

Then

Then see Dicky Banter,

With pace like a canter,

Lead down with Miss Barbara Buzzit :

You'd guess by her prancing

She's partial to dancing,

But she cares not a pin how she does it.

While round charms the ear and bright beams the eye.

See ! sweet Lydia Languish,

Her look of soft anguish !

And Bumpkin her charming Adonis !

Not a man in the room

Smells so strong of perfume,

Not a *Beau* so completely the *ton* is.

A favour they grant him to sit at my side.

And

Next

Next Phœbe Goliah,
 With Dr. Uriah,
 Poor man ! in what terrible taking !
 How he labours and puffs !
 How he sputters and snuffs
 And foams like a rasher of bacon !

But see Major Banti,
 A great Dilettanti,
 A famous garçon of Fop's Alley ;
 Mark his leisurely pace,
 His fashion and grace,
 The pride and delight of Miss Sally,

See! sweet Tabby Fidget,
A neice of Miss Bridget,
How her trim little head-piece keeps jolting!
So bedock'd, so belopp'd
So excessively cropt,
Like trimm'd bantums, or magpies a moulting.

See! see! Mr. Fegs
Work his arms and his legs,
Like a toy, made of pasteboard or paper:
If you pull but a string,
You excite the whole thing,
And you put every limb in a caper.

See!

THE SEA-SIDE.

61

See ! the lovely Florette,
That charming brunette,
A sweet sister nymph of the Graces :
With what ease and soft passion
The steps just in fashion
The tight little tawny one paces !

Dashing Billy, from town,
But lately come down,
How prolific, sweet youth, in soft speeches !
What a neat pair of hose !
And a new suit of clothes
With most delicate flesh-colour'd breeches !

While

While his gunpowder tea
He was sipping with glee
And of Margery's charms a beholder,
A fellow half blind,
Or half out of his mind,
Came and gave him a jolt on the shoulder :

Billy's cup it did fall
And bespilt the tea all
In a stream o'er his flesh-colour'd breeches :
Like oil it ran through
And it turn'd them all blue :
That tea so exceedingly rich is.

Then

Then poor little Billy

Began to look silly,

While the Misses all set up a titter:

Miss Winifred Riggle

Did chuckle and giggle

As if her ideas would split her.

Billy fac'd him about

And made — such a scout!

As if some dread dæmon had haul'd him:

The grave folks were sorry

To see him so herry

And hop'd the hot tea didn't scald him.

Now

Now why should I tell of the lovely Miss Carrot,
How she pouts like a pigeon and prates like a parrot?
Or of sweet Dicky Craven, the lad for the ladies,
How graceful his air, how genteely he made is,
How form'd in anatomy's pride, with a calf
That measures exactly a span and a half,
How, by staying last autumn too late in the air,
He caught a bad fever and lost all his hair,
While the wig that was sent him from town in a letter
Makes his delicate phiz look a thousand times better.
For O! 'twere an endless, a terrible, thing,
All the folks in the room, my dear mother, to sing.

But

But let not my Muse in her frisky figarum,
 Lack her due to the ARBITER ELEGANTIARUM
 To the smart little man, who, so fierce and polite,
 Struts about up and down in the room all the night,
 And, when the sweet souls of a dance have enough,
 Gives a pretty TAT-TOO with a fan on his cuff,
 As much as to say to the music, "leave off."
 Such the cut of his coat and the friz of his hair is.
 You'd think he was lately come over from Paris:
 Such his grace too polite, such the elegant flow
 Of his tongue, such the step of his minuet toe,
 That I vow I should guess, without fibbing or flash,
 He springs in a line from the blood of BEAU NASH.

Let me sing too, dear mother, in praise of the art,
Which so calls forth the graces and lightens the heart :
Which bosoms as cold as the Arctic, can warm
And which lends ev'ry Fair an unspeakable charm.

Bright Delia, portray'd by the sculptor's soft hand,
For a moment, our praise, our delight, may command :
Yet, tho' rich in the merits and graces of art,
The form, without MOTION, ne'er touches the heart :
But O ! could the skilful artificer give
His delicate moulding to MOVE and to live !
In the DANCE were her grace, were her beauties
display'd,
Ev'ry bosom would glow and adore the bright maid :

Ev'ry

Ev'ry turn that she took, like the Porcupine's quill,
 Some dart would she deal, some new venom distil :
 Or send, like the Parthian, destruction behind
 From her ivory neck and her locks unconfin'd.

Thus *ÆNEAS* I've read in the *TYRIAN* grove
 Met his beautiful mother, the Goddess of Love :
 And he thought, while stock still the divinity stood,
 It was some pretty stroller, a nymph of the wood :
 When she mov'd — all at once her fine heavenly
 mien,
 Her MOTION — so graceful, spoke Beauty's bright
 Queen :

New graces, new glories, each moment arise

And all the fair Goddesses now gladdens his eyes.

But now, my dear mother, &c.

RAMSGATE.

SEPTEMBER 2d, 1797.

SIMKIN SLENDERWIT.

LET.

LETTER VI.

*Criticisms on Mr. Simkin's Epistles—That Gentleman
takes Aim at the Sublime, and Leave of his
Readers, for the Season.*

OF the nymphs and the swains who enliven this shore,
Many vote me, dear mother, a terrible bore.

Mrs Fullock, one evening at Witherden's, said,
She wish'd all the poets in England were dead:
Or, at least, that they'd *flick* in their garrets in town,
And ne'er to such scenes as the present come down:

" What has SATIRE to do on the shores of the sea ?

" Where all should be levity, frolic, and glee :

" Where health and amusement should go hand in hand,

" And gaiety's smirk ev'ry feature command :

" What have poets to do in salt water to dip ?

" None but waters *perian* such fellows should sip."

Aristarcha Maria declar'd the SEA-SIDE

Was a vile *secondhand* of the charming BATH-GUIDE :

" What a whimsical author ! how harshly severe !

" His jokes how malicious ! his letters how dear !

" Then he cares not for TRUTH, and to fill up his metre

" Wou'd sacrifice Paul and supply him with Peter."

But

But the GRACES, dear mother, — I love the re-
 mark,
 Pronounce me A GLOW-WORM THAT BURNS IN
 THE DARK.
 Sweet GRACES! to Ramsgate each summer they come,
 And fly London smoke to recover their bloom;
 Here, of fameness unmindful, they stay till it freezes,
 And gain all they can from the plumping-up breezes.
 Yet, virgins celestial! not mindful alone
 Like the self-loving many, of *duties their own*;
 Nor content with the general health-seeking plan,
 They strive to dispense all the good that they can
 With charity's sunshine chill poverty bless,
 Give ease to affliction and comfort distress.

Thrice a week after breakfast in ocean they lave
 And gambol and frisk in the salt-water wave,
 Happy wave ! to encircle such delicate charms,
 To have gambols so frolicksome play'd in thine arms :
 Q ! long may they profit from bathing and drinking,
 And long may they shine who befriend your poor

SIMKIN !

Yet, how hard is my lot, my dear mother, to find
 Such spleen 'mong *the rational part of mankind* !
 What blood-thrifty bathers your son long to trim !
 What Nymphs and what Heroes would worry poor

Sim !

Give ease to religion and comfort distress.

Thrice

+

Then

Then while here I've tarried my carcase to wash,
So freely I've liv'd that I've spent all my cash:
These reasons so cogent will make me and Billy
I think ere 'tis long take a place in the Dili.

Then O! fare ye well, ye sweet regions of washing!
Ye haunts of the grave, of the gay, of the dashing!
Ye billow-beat sands! ye re-echoing shores!
Which no man of taste ever sees but adores:
Ye rock-fretted manors! ye sea-winnow'd plains!
Which pity poor man 'mid humanity's pains:
Ye chalky old cliffs! so renowned in story,
The Englishman's boast, his delight, and his glory:

So often kind beacons of pleasure and glee
 To many poor mortals a starving at sea :
 Fare ye well ! fare ye well ! till Sol's bountiful ray
 Again shall illumine the faddening day :
 Till again the glad fields in gay herbage shall smile,
 And summer new-mottle this health-giving isle :
 Till again lagging nerves and a lax circulation
 Shall send me to seek from your waters salvation,

Let numbers to SCARB'ROUGH each summer go
 down

And boast that they travel a great way from town :

Let many to WEYMOUTH with rapture repair,

Sweet Weymouth! so proud of the WORTHY OLD

FAIR

Let others with pleasure and gratitude boast

Of the sweet pretty seaports on DEVON'S FAIR COAST:

Let BRIGHTON still brag her adorable steyne,

Her downs so salubrious, her billow-toss'd scene:

Let HASTINGS her tribute of favour demand

For the sea-temper'd breezes that fan her smooth sand;

Yet HASTINGS, alas! is a fishing town still,

Let them tell of her beauties whatever they will.

Let shopkeepers yearly to MARGATE repair

And boast that they meet with good company there,

Of her town and her rooms and her excellent fishermen
 And ev'ry thing charming a mortal can wish;
 Let *those* sing their praises of BROADSTAIRS aloud
 Who come for snug bathing and shrink from a crowd;
 Yet for elegant whim, philosophical ease,
 Pure taste to delight and chaste fancy to please,
 For patterns of fashion, gentility, birth,
 For the union proverbial of wisdom and mirth,
 For a classical charm and a manner divine,
 Both the health to restore and the soul to refine,
 O! RAMSGATE! the credit, the glory, be thine!

What beauty! what symmetry! elegance! grace!
 Thy court of St. James's, thy ALBION PLACE:

How

How fan'd by salubrious breezes all day!

Her views how enchanting a great way to sea!

What summers with joy and delight could I pass there

O! were I, dear mother, but once my own master!

Then O! what eulogium shall tell of thy Pier!

That fabric stupendous! that monument dear!

A monument, sacred to vast public spirit,

To industry, art, and magnanimous merit:

Whose name shall from memory's tablet ne'er fade,

Kind guardian of FASHION, DECREPITUDE, TRADE!

For let Chloe, so wan with late RAKING in town,

To Thanet's sweet shores but a season come down,

Let

Let her stroll ev'ry day on this sea-circl'd mound,

And the roses shall bloom her soft dimples around,

Let Alderman Guttle, sad slave to the Gour,

Take a turn on its surface each morning about,

The breezes shall winnow new strength to his pegs

And blow out the foe from his arms and his legs.

Let the sea-plowing BARK, by foul weather distress'd,

And Ocean's un pitying terrors oppress'd,

But reach its kind, fatherly walls, and the Main

In concert with Boreas shall bluster in vain.

Then

Then hail thee, proud structure ! fair fabric of art !

Accept the kind wish of a high-flowing heart,

O ! ! long may'st thou boast thy bright beauty and
prime !

Long deride the attacks of thy enemy time !

Long, long, a magnificent monument shine !

Long the friend of the young and the old stand con-
fess'd !

Long stretch thy bent arms to relieve the distress'd !

Long in harmony strive with the health-giving wave

The nervous to brace and the sickly to save !

Without the dread terrors of sailing and rowing

The charms of the sea on thy vot'ries bestowing.

And

And O! how I mourn, thou benevolent boon,
 To quit thy adorable presence so soon!
 What heart-aching pains will it cost me BY Jove!
 No more on thy summit transported to rove,
 Yet join, my good mother, thy wishes to mine,
 That again I may visit these regions divine;
 Hear again the loud surge lash the echoing shore,
 The torrent again in fierce cataracts roar;
 That my blood's sluggish stream a year longer may
 flow,
 And my nerves again urge me to RAMSGATE to go.
 So again will I send you my thoughts and reflections,
 My hints, my adventures, my *nouvelle* connections;

Again will I sing the gay things that are seen

In these regions so healing to nerves and the spleen :

How the health-loving throng, let what will be the
matter,

Rise hearty and whole from a soule in the water :

How the old and the young and the nervous and all

Can burn at a raffle, or shine at a ball :

How new life they imbibe, and dispel clouding glooms

By soft music at home, or the cards at the rooms :

How in news, conversation, and prattle delight,

And hasten, with transport, to Burgefs each night.

So again shall my mirth-loving Muse try her wing ;

Again THANET's regions and company sing :

G

Again

Again strive your good-humour'd smile to prolong,
 And cheer your dull season again with her song.

RAMSGATE.

SEPTEMBER 9th, 1797.

SIMKIN SLENDERWIT.

FINIS.

G 2

APPENDIX
TO THE
SECOND EDITION.

VILLÆ FORMIANÆ,*

APUD PORTAM REGIAM IN INSULA THANETI

IN ORA MARITIMA CANTIANA

SUB AUSPICIIS HENRICI BARONIS DE HOLLAND

OLIM EXTRACTÆ,†

ODEN HANC DICATAM VOLUIT

T. M.

"Oræ maritimæ præsum a Formiis." Cicero de Villâ
suâ. Ep. 10. Lib. 16. ad Fam.

† Kingſgate, Iſle of Thanet, extract. A. D. circ. 1764.

VILLET FORMIANE

ANNO PORTAE RECLAM IN INSULA THAMET

IN ORA MARITIMA CANTIANA

SUB AUSPICIIS HENRICI BARONIS DE HOLLAND

OLIM EXTINCTA

ODEN HANC DICATAM VOLUIT

T. M.

1. Ora maritima ex libro 2. Formianae. Clavis de 1722
184. 184. 184. 184. 184.

2. HOLLANDIAE DE THAMET. A. D. 1844.

10

NON fonte parco Castaliæ leves
Haustus requirunt, non juga devixæ
Froncosa perlustrant, potentes
Imperio graviore Musæ.

Ecquæ, marini conscia numinis,
Non vel Sabinæ molliem volens
Fastidit umbræ, seu fluenta
Thessala, purpureosve colles?

Illisa fractis æquora rupibus
(Audin' ?) reclamant Oceano patrî
Nymphisque præsentem Camænam,
Et stimulo propiore versant.

Quanti

Quanti ingravescunt pectoris impetus !

Per regna venti seu fragor intonat

Undosa, seu sternit tumentes,

Halcyonis memor, aura fluctus,

Scenis-ne raptum talibus advenam

Admovit oris Parthenope suis ?

Quis laudis antiquæ recessus,

Insolita novitate solers,

Mirè reclusit ? cernis, ut undique

Musco columnæ densius obsitæ,

Arcesque præruptæ minantur,

(Imperii simulacra fracti !)

Quà non filendis funeribus frequens

Expertus olim Danus inhorruit,

Quid marte nativo valerent

Indomitæ Britonum phalanges.

At dum residit clangor, et æthere

Vibrata belli fulgura concidunt

Pacata, ne desit trementi

Perfugium populo salutis,

Juxta labanti culmine, sub pia

Manu resurgit deciduæ domûs

Incana majestas, aviti

Reliquiæ columenque cultûs.

Jam

Jam fabulosas divitis ingeni non

Formas refingit dædalus artifex,

Sceptraque Neptuni satellites

Cærulea spatiat aulæ.

Frustra severus, carmine quis notet

Injurioso delicias soli

Ah parce, Lucili, * precamur,

Fulminea metuende lingua.

Non hic nefandorum assecla criminum,

Surdove pectus verberare concutit

Erynnis ultrix : eruditi

Fusa vides monumenta luxûs,

* GRAY.

Honestiori

Honestiori sub specie ; tenet

Imago mentem latior, et modis

Vix ante quæsitis Voluptas

Augurio meliore ridet.

Me, lenioris per sapientiæ

Secreta ductum, littoribus sacris

Natura mulcet, nec caduci

Temporis immemorem per omnes

Curasque et umbras ire levem finit ;

Celsisque honorem frontibus admonet

Lugere decussum, et profani

Ludibrium diadema vulgi.

Nomen

Nomen sed altum est, sed vigor igneus,

Rerum superstes fama, nec imperi

Frangenda compages Britannis,

Et procerum bene junctus ordo:

Nobis marino spes Capitolio!

Nobis relucens oceano (precor)

Insigne PACIS præpotenti

Mox populo pia jura firmet.

Ad Insulæ Thaneti

Idibus Septembribus

1757.